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# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



## San Benito-Monterey Unit

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### **CAL FIRE Declares Burn Ban in San Benito and Monterey Counties**

**Monterey, CA** – As the Central Coast transitions into spring and summer, CAL FIRE has suspended all burn permits within the State Responsibility Area and Local Responsibility Areas under contract with CAL FIRE, in San Benito and Monterey Counties. This suspension takes effect May 18, 2018 and bans all residential outdoor burning of landscape debris including branches and leaves.

“The recent vegetation fires in San Benito and Monterey Counties are stark reminders of the importance of defensible space,” said Brennan Blue, CAL FIRE San Benito-Monterey Unit Chief. Substantial rainfall this winter and spring has created a significant crop of annual grass that has now cured. The brush and trees have not recovered from four years of drought which combined, creates a dangerous combination of very receptive fuels and drought stressed vegetation. “Please protect your life and property, as well as the lives of firefighters, by creating and maintaining a minimum of 100 feet defensible space. We’re ready for wildfire; are you?” Since January 1, 2018, CAL FIRE and firefighters across the state have already responded to over 974 wildfires that have burned over 5,800 acres.

“Despite the rainfall in our mini miracle-March, years of drought have created a heavy dead fuel situation,” said Chief Blue. “The large grass crop, dead fuels from years of drought, and tree mortality have created a dangerous fuels situation. Remember that One Less Spark means One Less Wildfire.”

CAL FIRE is asking residents to ensure that they are prepared for wildfires including maintaining a minimum of 100 feet of Defensible Space around every home.

Here are some tips to help prepare your home and property:

- Clear all dead or dying vegetation 100 feet around all structures.
- Landscape with fire resistant/drought tolerant plants
- Find alternative ways to dispose of landscape debris like chipping or hauling it to a biomass energy facility

The department may issue restricted temporary burning permits if there is an essential reason due to public health, safety. Campfires are allowed in designated campgrounds, or in established facilities on private property with permission of the landowner and jurisdictional authority. Persons burning under any special permit must also check with the Monterey Bay Air Resources District for addition regulations and requirements.

For additional information on preparing for and preventing wildfires visit [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org).

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MEDIA ONLY For further information on CAL FIRE's response to incidents in San Benito and Monterey Counties, please contact the San Benito-Monterey Unit Public Information Officer at (831) 647-6257 or [BEU.PIO@fire.ca.gov](mailto:BEU.PIO@fire.ca.gov).